

led students to seek education at DC37 rather than other places.

Table 8 lists specific factors which were cited by staff and students as contributing to the Fund's success. As the Table shows, 7 of the 14 reasons listed were mentioned by both groups. What follows is a discussion of each factor:

(1) The Fund is run by the union, in which members have faith and trust.

The importance of the fact that the Fund is union administered was mentioned repeatedly by staff members of the Fund and the union. According to these staff members' reports, the rank-and-file have great faith in the union and feel it is on their side. In Roberts' words, "People know that the union wants them to succeed. They can trust the union." And Maher stated that at DC37, "People know they will get a fair shake."

A number of union staff people stated that a management-run program would not attract many participants. Bernard Rifkin explained his view of why many negotiated worker education programs have low levels of utilization:

The programs are management run. The company has no stake in getting the plan utilized because it is just another cost item. The union has no stake in getting it utilized because it sees the plan as paternalistic; it doesn't want any part of it. Here the program is union run which is very important.

(2) The members feel a sense of ownership toward the union, which is a supportive, service-oriented institution.

Staff stated frequently that Council members feel entitled to use the many services provided to them by the union. As one explained,

Union members view education as another benefit to which they are entitled, just like the health benefit. They

TABLE 8

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SUCCESS OF THE EDUCATION FUND

<u>FACTOR</u>	<u>CITED BY STAFF</u>	<u>CITED BY STUDENTS</u>
1. The Fund is run by the union, in which the members have faith and trust.	X	
2. The members feel a sense of ownership toward the union, which is a supportive, service-oriented institution.	X	
3. The top union leadership is extremely approachable and philosophically endorses education for the membership.	X	
4. The program is accountable to the students; they have input into it.	X	X
5. Members study with other adults and co-workers, and the program is geared toward working adults.	X	X
6. The program is voluntary, and the students in it are highly motivated.	X	X
7. The students have a clear need for education.	X	
8. The staff has a stake in promoting use of the Education Fund.	X	
9. Teachers and counselors are accessible, supportive, and interested in the students' welfare.	X	X
10. Classes are small and nonintimidating.	X	X
11. There is less bureaucracy and red tape than at other schools.		X
12. There are social benefits from attending Fund programs.	X	X
13. It is much less expensive to attend school at the Fund than at other schools.		X
14. Classes are offered in a centralized, convenient facility.	X	X

feel that by being union members they are entitled to these services. Thus, they feel more comfortable about using them.

Jerome Contee, Assistant Director for Skills Development, commented that,

Members are not called clients. It is their organization. They are dues-paying members and they are buying services for themselves...The fact that students see the Education Fund as their program is very important because many students have had bad experiences with school and have many fears about coming back.

(3) The top union leadership is extremely approachable and philosophically endorses education for the membership.

The fund staff often refers to the role of the Council leadership in encouraging use of the Fund. Joyce Dudley, Coordinator of Counseling, said that,

While the program has to be good, it could not succeed without the kind of leadership provided here. The top union leaders are extremely approachable, and members are not afraid to talk to them and voice their concerns.

Contee confirmed this, saying that,

A lot of people take advantage of many services here. It is a very socially active Council. It is the leadership's philosophy that is directly responsible for people's attitudes in this regard...The leadership is extremely approachable and the members are not shy. If they have a gripe, they will go in and see the Executive Director. They refer to him by his first name.

Not only is the union leadership approachable, but it has offered firm support for the education of its members. The Executive Director feels this leadership support was an important factor in the Fund's development: "Education is one more aspect of the union and its philo-

sophy. This union deals with the whole worker. You cannot separate the job and the individual."

(4) The program is accountable to the students; they have input into it.

Seemingly an outgrowth of the factors reported above, students feel that they have a voice in the direction and nature of the Fund and its programs. Because the union is their institution, they feel entitled to influence its development to make it responsive to their needs. Both staff and students mentioned this factor as contributing to the Fund's success.

This atmosphere of accountability is captured in a statement made by Sean Gibney, Education Fund Administrator, to a group of students. He told them, "You are consumers getting a product. Make sure you get what you want."

(5) Members study with their peers and the program is geared toward working adults.

The importance of this was emphasized repeatedly by both staff and students. It was frequently one of the major reasons cited for the Fund's success. The fact that the learning environment is composed of adult co-workers is seen as a key influence in attracting otherwise reluctant workers back to the classroom. The counseling coordinator explained it this way:

These workers are looking for an adult environment. They are threatened by being in a large, youth-oriented educational institution. So even as popular as adult education is becoming, still, when offered in the context of a youth-oriented institution, it is very alienating and threatening to a lot of workers. Here, because DC37 is a work setting, involving comradeship between workers, it becomes an adult learning center with a common link.

The comments of students further illustrate this point:

Here the program is geared to working adults. That is very important to me...I'm not afraid to ask questions.

Because we're studying with co-workers our own age, there is less tension and no generation gap.

The adult age group is very important. And we're all co-workers here...I would hate to be in (High School Equivalency) class with teenage dropouts. They make us feel very embarrassed and ridicule us.

(6) The program is voluntary, and the students in it are highly motivated.

According to staff and students, because the students at DC37 have elected to be there, their commitment is high and helps to make the program work. One CNR student said, "Everyone in this building going to school is here because they want to be--whatever their motivation." Taaffe described students at CNR as having less of the anxiety about why they are in school that often plagues regular undergraduates. He said the CNR program is thus geared more toward education than discipline. And, as Lillian Roberts explained, "Students here are self-screening. Unlike many undergraduates, they know why they are here. They have decided that they want to be in school or that it is necessary."

(7) The students have a clear need for education.

This was more often implied than specifically cited as a reason for the Fund's success. Yet, one union staff person stated that "the Fund

is highly utilized because there is a direct need and a direct payoff. Members need it for promotion and job change, and that is why they use it so much."

(8) The staff has a stake in promoting use of the Education Fund.

A member of the Education Fund staff said that "we, the staff, are pressured to get the members to use the programs. If they don't, we'll lose our jobs. We have a definite stake in promoting the programs to the membership."

(9) Teachers and counselors are accessible, supportive, and interested in the students' welfare.

The importance of the quality of the relationship between staff and students was frequently mentioned by both groups. It is seen as an important factor in easing the transition of this group of working adults back to school. Reportedly, many had bad experiences during their earlier years in school, and the supportive atmosphere provided by the Education Fund staff is needed to overcome the ill effects of these experiences.

This seems especially true in light of comments by students about other schools they recently attended (before DC37). The lack of close student-staff relationships was often cited as an important alienating factor. As a student in an English as a Second Language class explained, "I've gone to other schools and the teachers were entirely different. They weren't half as sympathetic and capable as the teachers are here." Other students described the Education Fund faculty as "remarkable," "patient," "understanding," and "sympathetic," and one said that "here,

if we have a complaint, we can go to the teacher or program director and tell them about it."

The Assistant Director for Skills Development described why high school equivalency students are motivated to come to the DC37 program:

There are many, many other high school equivalency programs throughout the City of New York that people could go to. The reason they come to DC37 is because here they are treated as though they are special. They are cared for in a nonthreatening atmosphere and the instructors know them, their skills, and weaknesses.

(10) Classes are small and nonintimidating.

According to Michael Brailove, who coordinates many of the Fund's basic skills programs, "Even though the education program has expanded so much, it has not lost its personalized touch."

Students frequently mentioned the value of the small, personalized class atmosphere which exists at the Education Fund. According to one:

It is too crowded in other places. We can't relate to each other in large classes. Unlike in traditional colleges, we feel free to ask questions and give feedback. There is a lot of lecturing.

(11) There is less bureaucracy and red tape than at other schools.

Students, particularly, cited this as an important difference between DC37 and other schools. Those who had been to other schools reported complicated, time-consuming registration procedures and found the simplified admissions process at the Education Fund a welcome relief.

(12) There are social benefits from attending Fund programs.

While perhaps not a prime factor in initially drawing people to classes, both staff and students mentioned the social rewards which make studying at DC37 more desirable. A Fund administrator explained that, "Students come and work hard, but there's a very social atmosphere and

they have fun. It's a night out." Another staff member commented, "The environment is very social. This is important because it brings a lot of people to the programs."

(13) It is much less expensive to attend school at the Fund than at other schools.

A number of students stated that they could not afford the tuition fees charged by other area schools but could pay the nominal costs at the Fund.

(14) Classes are offered in a centralized, convenient facility.

Education Fund programs are offered in two locations (15 minutes' walk from each other) in an area of Manhattan in which many of the members work. The majority of Fund services are housed in the union headquarters.

Both staff and students cited this as a factor in the Fund's success. The Executive Director stated that "the unique reason for the education program's success is that all the facilities are in the union headquarters. It is very costly to have it this way, but it is a very important expense." A member of the Fund's staff said that "students come here where the program is centralized, and this is an initial motivation for them to get involved in more than one program. They come for one thing and end up hearing about others." Several students said they were attending classes at DC37 rather than at other schools, because of their convenient location.

The location, however, is not always considered convenient. Some students saw the location as a hardship which had to be overcome. As noted, the Fund has experimented with decentralization of programs as a possible way of reaching more members.

Impacts of the Education Fund

What are the effects of the Education Fund? Does it meet its stated objectives? Are there secondary or unintended impacts of Fund use? What are the impacts on different groups?

Assessment of Fund program impacts is based mainly on staff reports and on the comments of students, most of whom have had no prior educational experience at DC37. The latter fact means that students' views generally reflect short-term impacts only. While staff views reflect observation over a number of years, there has been very little formal follow-up or study of what happens to members as a result of their educational experiences. Perhaps this is attributable to the union's emphasis on delivery of services to members as a top priority, rather than on documentation. (There have, however, been a number of attempts recently to begin evaluation and documentation of various Fund activities, including the 1977 Annual Report, increased record-keeping and follow-up of tuition refund students, a new Student Advisory Committee designed to increase feedback from students, and staff evaluation committees within the Education Fund.)

Impact on Workers

Based on discussions with staff and students, the following major impacts of the Education Fund on workers were identified:

(1) Use of the Fund enhances the possibility of mobility and job advancement, as well as providing greater job security.

In the view of a member of the union staff, "The Fund is very important to the job and career development aspects of the individual members." This view reflects the most important hoped-for outcome of Education Fund

use. As mentioned throughout this report, given the current economic situation in New York City, it is questionable if or to what degree use of the Fund is directly or immediately translatable into career advancement. Nevertheless, the belief of both staff and students that education is a necessary prerequisite for advancement in the New York City civil service system seems to hold true. For whatever jobs or promotions are available, the possession of a high school diploma, adequate test scores, specialized skills training, or a college degree may be an essential minimum requirement.

Many Fund staff and users say that participation in certain programs results indirectly (and sometimes directly) in promotion and upgrading to a higher job title. Students get high school diplomas in order to keep their jobs or to qualify for promotion. Members take test preparation courses for exams which will broaden their opportunities for job advancement. Now that the city has begun recognizing certification of college degree completion, the possession of a degree may have increased weight in promotional considerations.

The importance of all the above in a time of serious job scarcity is obvious. According to Associate Director Roberts, "Nobody should say that licensing and credentials aren't important. They're a form of recognition by society which affords people more mobility."

In a survey of CNR graduates, 30 percent of respondents attributed a salary raise or promotion directly to having a college degree. One CNR student reported that, "I did not pass the promotional exam. But that doesn't matter, because when I get my degree I'll automatically be promoted." Other students in the class agreed that a bachelor's degree

was a "door to promotion in the city," but saw a less direct connection.

(2) Fund users have increased expectations for mobility and job advancement.

What about the member who trains for a position, feels pride in receiving a qualifying certificate, then sees no results? In the view of the White Collar Division Director, "Hand in hand with the career opportunities that may develop from these education programs is the frustration that comes from participating in the programs and then seeing no result. People take courses, pass the tests, and then there is nowhere to be promoted to. The jobs are just not there." The CNR survey mentioned previously found that 70 percent of respondents felt their college degrees did not make much difference in their city jobs, and many were dissatisfied as a result. In the words of one CNR student, "They promise you a slot, and then it's not there."

This sense of frustration and thwarted expectations reportedly affects college students more than high school equivalency students. The latter group is often most concerned with job security. Many adult college students, however, still see the college degree as a "key to success."

(3) The job performance of Fund users often appears to improve as a result of utilizing the education programs.

As one High School Equivalency student said, "Now that I'm studying, I'm much more alert on the job. It really helps a lot. I'm better with paperwork too." An English as a Second Language student reported that before she took the class, she was unable to read or write on the job. Now, she finds it easier to handle her job effectively because of her

improved ability to communicate in English.

This improved job performance may at least indirectly enhance the advancement opportunities of the participants.

(4) Use of the Fund often increases members' pride in their city jobs.

According to Roberts, "Licensing provides goals for the workers. Everyone should have pride in their job--no matter what it is. People need to know that their efforts are appreciated and valued, and licensing is one way of doing this." The credentials earned by students may be perceived as valuable in themselves and thus may have impact on their overall satisfaction and pride in their jobs.

(5) The ability of Fund users to pursue further education is enhanced--in terms of either psychological readiness or increased credentials or skills.

According to students and staff, many High School Equivalency students go on to CNR or one of the Fund college programs. The intent to pursue college was reflected in the comments of some students in both High School Equivalency and English as a Second Language classes.

Jerome Contee, of Skills Development, reported that High School Equivalency graduates are "turned on again in terms of learning. Their bad experiences with prior schooling are reversed. Many go on to the Developmental Skills or College Programs." This reawakening of enjoyment in learning seems to be one of the most important secondary impacts of the Education Fund.

According to Taaffe, approximately 45 percent of CNR graduates get

into the graduate schools of their choice, and 30 percent of graduates are currently in graduate school.

(6) Fund users often have improved self-esteem, self-confidence, resourcefulness, or skills.

Staff and students cited important psychological benefits resulting from schooling which would seem to affect other areas of the students' lives.

Contee explained that High School Equivalency graduates have a "real sense of accomplishment. They feel very proud that they have made it through the program, and they often bring in their diplomas to show to the staff that trained them."

The teacher of the English as a Second Language class said the class "is very important to the students. For some of them, it is a major thing in their lives." The students' comments indicated that learning English and being able to communicate with more people markedly increased their sense of self-worth and pride. Reportedly this helped their interactions with both employers and family members.

According to Joyce Dudley of Counseling, college work helps people "recognize their own skills and verbalize them to others. It is this, more than the degree itself, which helps people get jobs."

Taaffe feels that graduates of CNR are sometimes better-prepared than other college graduates to deal with future endeavors because they have developed into independent learners with the resourcefulness to know how to pursue their own goals.

(7) Use of the Education Fund has a positive effect on family life.

Though reference is often made to the disruptive influence worker education has on family life, students made numerous references to the beneficial effects of their education on family members and family relationships.

Staff members said that education improves family life and makes the students better parents. Also, as Dudley explained, "Some members say that once they have started going to school, all of a sudden their kids do their homework much more, and a sort of a healthy competition develops. The parents, going to school, serve as very positive role models."

Everyone interviewed from the High School Equivalency Program agreed that their education has a positive effect on their children. The children stay in school longer and do better, because they see how important education must be if their parents, after having been out of school for so long, are returning to school while working. One woman reported, "I have two teenage grandchildren who can't wait until I get my high school diploma...My granddaughter helps me with my homework."

English as a Second Language students said their children are very proud of them. Several of these students, however, mentioned that their husbands had been very threatened by their return to school and saw no need for it. In Dudley's view, "The reaction of the spouse cannot be generalized. Sometimes they are very encouraging and supportive and they get involved in education too. Other times there is negative competition and the spouse gets very jealous." (Courses sponsored by the Counseling Department are designed to help deal with this.)

It should be added that a number of students did mention the difficulties involved in going to school while raising a family and working. They said, however, that because school is an important priority, they are willing to make sacrifices and find ways to work out scheduling difficulties.

(8) Participation in the Fund has social and interpersonal benefits.

Students mentioned they value the program partly because they enjoy their peers, form new friendships, and learn skills in communicating and relating to others. As a High School Equivalency student expressed it, "You meet different people here and learn how to relate to people. We're comfortable with the people we study with, and we enjoy each other and challenge each other."

The interpersonal benefits are perhaps even more important for the retirees, many of whom may have few other social contacts. Taaffe described CNR as "a lifesaver" for some retirees.

Impacts on Union and City

The Education Fund also has impacts on the union and on the city. The existence of the Fund apparently enhances the membership's loyalty to the union. Several students reported that they think more highly of the union because it is sponsoring education. A CNR student said that "we get the feeling that the union is concerned with our welfare." They see it as a provider of special services, and thus their commitment to the Council increases.

Some Education Fund students become more actively involved in the union as a whole. The Director of the Schools Division reported that attendance at political meetings at the Council has greatly increased since

members started going to classes, because they are already in the building for school, so are more inclined to volunteer for political activities.

Utilization of the Fund by some students appears to create a "snow-ball effect" which increases overall participation. A few students mentioned that once they got involved in a program, they told their friends and co-workers about it. As a union official said, "If one person succeeds in a Fund program, then someone else finds out about it and wants to get involved too."

The City of New York benefits from the Fund because it helps create a better-trained workforce. Associate Director Roberts stated that "the education program is just another way for employees to serve the city." Another member of the union staff said, "It is in the city's best interest to have better-educated employees because these employees will perform better on the job."

It also seems that the city would be affected by the level of job satisfaction among its workforce. The discussion earlier in this section of the Fund's impacts on workers raises several questions in this regard. Does the Fund increase worker satisfaction by improving job performance and providing credentials? Or does it foster dissatisfaction if expectations rise without the attendant advancement in careers? As a related issue, what happens if, as some city officials say, job titles change but job duties do not? An attempt to answer these questions is beyond the scope of this report. It seems, however, that just as use of the Fund may affect levels of worker satisfaction, the level of satisfaction may influence further use of the Fund. That is, worker perceptions about the degree of

"payoff" from education will affect their future decisions about further schooling.

XI. ASSESSMENT OF ELEMENTS OF FUND SUCCESS

What makes the Education Fund work? Why do thousands of members who have been out of school for years come to DC37 after a full day's work to attend classes? Why does a mother with a job and several children set aside time to study for an Education Fund class?

The success of the District Council 37 Education Fund can be viewed in different ways. In this report, the Fund is examined, first, in terms of reduction of barriers to participation in worker education and, second, in terms of an interplay of factors which lead to Education Fund use, some of which are replicable in other settings and some of which are not.

The National Manpower Institute (NMI) has surveyed many worker education programs with low rates of utilization (see Charner et al., 1978). In most of these programs, workers receive reimbursements for tuition costs. Through surveys of union officials, management officials, and workers, NMI has identified problems or barriers which affect educational participation and has proposed methods for overcoming them or reducing their impact. These problems or barriers can be classified as either psychological/attitudinal or structural.

Table 9 lists some of the problems identified in the NMI study and shows provisions or program features of the DC37 Education Fund which reduce the impact of these barriers or eliminate them. What follows is a discussion of each of these problems:

- (1) Management does not encourage workers to use the program.

At DC37, the program was initiated and/or endorsed by top-level leadership.

TABLE 9

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN WORKER EDUCATION PROGRAMS, COMPARED WITH
THE DC37 EDUCATION FUND

<u>GENERAL BARRIERS/PROBLEMS</u>	<u>DC37 EDUCATION FUND</u>
<u>Structural</u>	
1. Management does not encourage workers to use the program.	Leadership endorsement of education. Institutional support for the program.
2. Workers lack information about the program and about educational opportunities.	Well-publicized program; ongoing promotional efforts.
3. Workers lack counseling and educational advisement.	Continuous availability of counseling and advisement.
4. Workers have little or no input into the development of programs. ¹	Program accountability. Worker input encouraged.
5. There are insufficient incentives for workers to participate in programs and/or they have low expectations of the payoff.	Most programs result in some form of credit, credentialing, certification, or letters to employers. Many users see the Ed Fund as a key to career advancement.
6. The range of educational offerings is too limited or restrictive.	Wide variety of educational offerings and types of study sponsored.
7. Application and approval procedures are complicated and time-consuming.	Lack of red tape. Admissions process is simplified.
8. Classes are scheduled at times inconvenient to workers.	Classes are scheduled flexibly; most are held in the evenings.
9. Classes are held in inconvenient locations.	Classes are held near to where many students are employed.
10. The cost of education is too high.	Little or no cost to students.
11. Child care is unavailable.	Child care facilities available on Saturdays.

Psychological

- | | |
|--|--|
| 12. Workers have no need or desire for education. | Current programs reflect workers' interests or needs. |
| 13. Workers are afraid or reluctant to return to school. | Support services available. Small classes. Workers study with peers. |
| 14. Workers feel they are too old to return to school. | Workers study with other adults. |

¹ This was not included in the NMI study but has been cited in other discussions of problems with worker utilization of education.

Whether in a union or management context, this means that the program does not have to justify its existence and objectives. From the start, it has had inherent credibility and legitimacy. Not only does that reduce potential threats to the program's status and survival, but it also appears to speed up the process by which the workers come to accept and believe in its value and thus consider utilizing it.

There is also institutional support for DC37's education program. Again, the program does not have to justify itself among different groups within the institution because, as a union staffperson said, "All of the services, including education, are supportive of what we as a union are doing here...In other settings, the goals of the education department may conflict with other institutional goals." At DC37 the educators feel that the Fund, with few exceptions, is endorsed and valued throughout the Council.

(2) Workers lack information about the program.

In the NMI study, lack of information was one of the most frequently identified problems regarding plan use. At DC37, there appears to be widespread awareness of the education program. Specific information is also made readily available to the membership (through PEP, Education Fund notices, the locals, etc.).

(3) Workers lack counseling and educational advisement.

The NMI study also identified a desire for educational counseling and advisement on the part of many workers. At DC37, counseling and support are continuously available at many points throughout the Education Fund. This appears to be extremely important for people who may have been out of school for years, are often afraid to return, and who may not know how to plan their education.

(4) Workers have little or no input into the development of programs.

Some of the recent literature on worker education states that levels of participation will increase only when workers are actively involved in the development and administration of programs, rather than being handed a preset plan. At DC37, the program is held accountable. Workers are encouraged to voice their complaints, and they know that it is their program, which they are entitled to use and to shape.

Also, DC37 is unusual in that there is a very direct link between the members and the top-level leadership. Thus, it was reported that a member with a complaint about the Ed Fund may well choose the Executive Director's office as the first place to register it.

(5) There are insufficient incentives for workers to participate in programs and/or they have low expectations of the payoff.

As mentioned throughout this report, most students are motivated to use the Education Fund because they have needs or goals related to career advancement. They often see the Fund as a way to meet those goals. Despite some ambiguity regarding the extent of the Fund's direct effect on career advancement, most Fund programs offer some tangible "reward", such as credits, a certificate, or a letter to employers. These rewards at least offer the possibility of an economic or other work-related payoff.

(6) The range of educational offerings is too limited or restrictive.

Many worker education programs only provide for study which is directly job related. At the Council, the Education Fund's mandate is interpreted broadly, and a wide range of offerings exists. The scope of Education Fund programs includes everything from remedial work in basic skills to advanced

technical study at the graduate level. Also, degree programs do not have to be job related. Thus, a wide range of educational needs and interests can be met through Fund programs.

(7) Application and approval procedures are complicated and time consuming.

As mentioned, the Fund's simplified admissions process reflects an awareness of the deterrent effect that difficult registration procedures have on working adults. Registration is kept simple and flexible. The importance of this has been noted by Education Fund students who have attended (or tried to attend) other schools in the city.

(8) Classes are scheduled at times inconvenient to workers.

Shift workers often mention the difficulty in trying to accommodate class schedules and work schedules.

The municipal employees who use the Education Fund often work during the day. Thus, most classes are held weekday evenings and on Saturdays. Some classes, however, are also offered during the day. This is done in an effort to accommodate as many workers' schedules as possible.

(9) Classes are held in inconvenient locations.

For the large number of students who work near the Council's headquarters, it is relatively convenient to attend classes after work on the way home.

(10) The cost of education is too high.

In the majority of tuition reimbursement programs, workers must advance often large sums of money before receiving refunds. This is frequently cited as a deterrent to worker use of education benefits. While this arrangement exists in the Education Fund's Tuition Refund Program, the vast

majority of Fund programs involve little or no out-of-pocket expense for students. Typically, students pay for books and materials and the Fund pays the rest. This stems from the Fund's method of financing: money is specifically set aside to be used for education. The importance of this factor is obvious, since the Fund caters to a population predominantly in low- and middle-income levels.

(11) Child care is unavailable.

The Education Fund somewhat reduces this barrier by providing Saturday activities for children whose parents are attending classes.

(12) Workers have no need or desire for education.

Opinion varies as to how much this contributes to underutilized worker education programs. Regardless, at DC37 programs reflect workers' interests or needs. While programs were initiated by the Council leadership, they were continued only if they met with sufficient response. The number of highly subscribed Fund programs attests to a strong interest or need on the part of many workers in pursuing further education.

(13) Workers are afraid or reluctant to return to school.

The Fund incorporates a number of program features designed to ease the transition back to school for adults who often have had had experiences with learning and are afraid of failure. Support is often available from teachers, counselors, and administrators.

Members study with their co-workers in small, personalized classes geared toward working adults. The emphasis seems to be on goals rather than grades. While students may have previously held professors in awe, at DC37 teachers and students seem to have a very good rapport. Teachers

and administrators appear to view students with warmth, interest, and respect. At a meeting between staff and students, the Education Fund Administrator told students that "anyone who can work eight hours a day and then come to class is incredibly courageous. I admire you tremendously." Students reported that teachers are "wonderful and patient," do "a remarkable job," and "are understanding and keep you interested."

(14) Workers feel they are too old to return to school.

Because the DC37 education program is geared toward adult learners, it combats the notion of many workers that it is bad or shameful to return to school after reaching a particular age. Not only does the existence of the program give adult learning inherent legitimacy, but the Fund's counseling program specifically deals with the issue of age. Also, because Fund users study with co-workers, they see that a return to school in later life is not unusual.

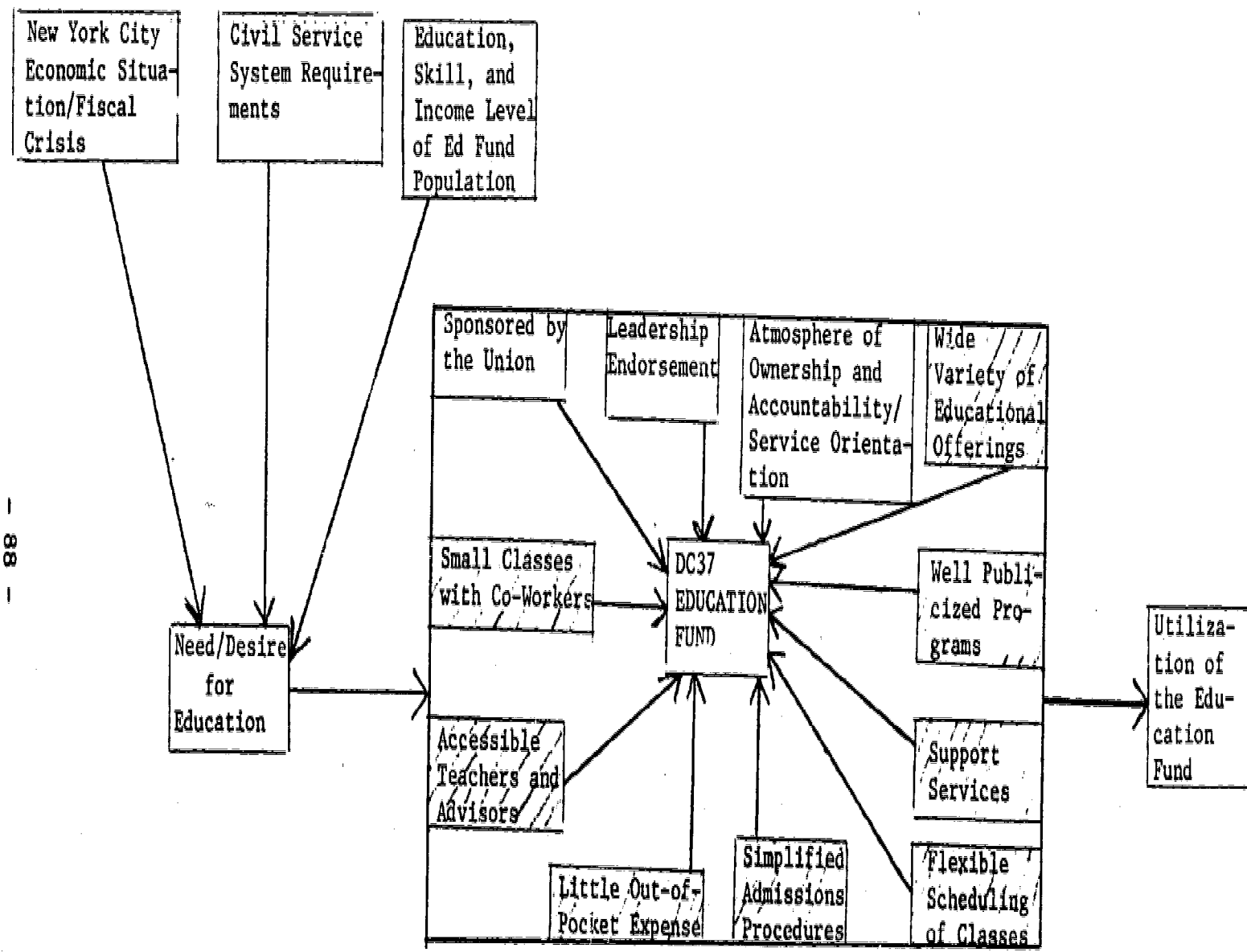
The major purpose of this study is to determine what elements make the Education Fund work and then examine whether these ingredients can be applied to other settings. In the case of the Education Fund, the elements of success consist of both replicable program features and forces or factors which are specific to the particular environment at DC37.

Table 10 diagrams the interplay of factors which results in use of the Education Fund. While the 14 factors just discussed focus mainly on replicable program features or provisions, the diagram takes into account all elements of success, whether or not they are replicable. The diagram distinguishes between elements which could be applied in other environments and those which are an outgrowth of the specific setting.

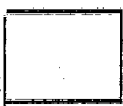
It should be noted here that a discussion of "replicable" versus

TABLE 10

WHY PEOPLE USE THE EDUCATION FUND



- Replicable Element of Success



- Element of Success Peculiar to DC37 Setting

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"nonreplicable" elements of success has its flaws and limitations. The distinction is more accurately between elements which seem to be more easily translatable to another setting and those which seem more rooted in the particular environment. For example, certain "nonreplicable" elements at DC37 may well exist or could be developed in other settings. The main point to be made is that they are part of the DC37 context, independent of the Education Fund. The "replicable" features, however, are those which have been developed in the course of setting up an effective worker education program; thus their potential applicability to other settings seems greater.

At DC37, the "nonreplicable" elements of Fund success include those which create a need or desire for education on the part of many municipal employees and those which are part of the atmosphere at the union.

New York civil service requirements are such that advancement and promotion are contingent mainly upon the passing of tests. Specific education and training is often needed to pass the tests. Many positions require high school diplomas and sometimes college degrees. Specialized skill training is also often needed to advance in particular careers.

A large proportion of the eligible Education Fund population lacks the education or skills necessary to meet these requirements. Because of their lack of education, many members are concentrated in entry-level or low-paying jobs, and because they are concentrated in these jobs, their need or desire for education becomes greater.

Added to this is the impact of the growing economic crisis in New York City. As the fiscal crisis worsens, jobs are becoming more scarce and lines of promotion are tightening. The ability to hold onto a job and

be able to compete for advancement becomes tougher, yet more essential. This, too, adds to the need for education.

Thus, these three elements--the civil service system requirements, the education/income level of the eligible Education Fund population, and the New York City economic crunch--combine to create a need or desire for education on the part of many workers.

Most all of these workers are members of District Council 37, which has a unique atmosphere of service to its membership. The union sees its function as meeting many of the workers' life needs, above and beyond traditional wage and job concerns. In that vein, the Council sponsors a broad range of programs and services which members are encouraged to use. As mentioned in this report, the top leadership strongly espouses this attitude. Workers, who have elected the leadership, feel a sense of ownership (as well as faith and trust) toward the union and its services, and they hold the union's programs accountable. It appears that the result of the union's philosophy is that workers not only feel entitled to use the services available to them, but often feel that it is in their best interest to do so. New programs are developed and existing programs are dropped in response to their level of use or popularity. Thus, the need and desire for education are assessed in an ongoing fashion by the union, and the process is viewed as continuous and interactive.

Added to the union's service orientation is a very personalized atmosphere of comradeship which exists at the Council. There is a warm, comfortable environment throughout the Council, with much joking and cordial interaction. Despite the large size of the union headquarters, many people throughout the building know each other. This type of atmosphere would

appear to be particularly important to people living in a large metropolitan environment such as New York City. John Morse (1974: 33-34) summed up the nature of the Council's atmosphere as follows:

District Council 37...has...increasingly become a total service institution for its members...In addition to the traditional union affairs...this organization has become a social club, a school, a 'church,' and a community center...In a rather unusual sense, the District Council has become a 'home' away from home, one that provides many of the involvements that people living in an urbanized, bureaucratized metropolis feel that they have somehow lost.

The combination of services delivered in a warm, personalized atmosphere by an institution members inherently trust appears to encourage many students to pursue education at DC37 rather than at other schools. If an educational service is offered to them by the union, they may feel any or all of the following things: (1) the service is "theirs" and thus they are entitled to use it; (2) the union is offering/encouraging it, so it is probably in their best interest to use it; (3) it may even be "fun" to use it; and (4) if the service doesn't meet their needs, they have a right to call for services that do.

Once these adults get involved in the Education Fund, they find a program with a built-in set of features which makes their often frightening re-entry into the classroom less fearful and threatening. They find programs specifically tailored to them--working adults with a particular set of educational needs, preferences, and difficulties. The features of these programs are the "replicable" elements of Fund success outlined earlier in this section. They include: small classes with co-workers; accessible teachers and advisors; little out-of-pocket expense; simplified admissions procedures; flexible scheduling of classes; support services;

well-publicized programs; and a diverse range of educational offerings.

In summary, the combination of these features offered in the atmosphere of the Council to a population of workers with a need for education results in an education program which has succeeded in drawing many workers to its services.

A last point in discussing the elements of the Education Fund's success: How many of these elements would be needed in another setting in order to increase rates of program utilization? Indeed, would any of them work in another setting or is it necessary to have them all as they exist and interact at DC37? While this study distinguishes elements which would seem to have wide applicability, it appears that the only way to answer these questions is through experimentation in other environments. Perhaps this study and similar ones can act as guides or catalysts to such experimentation. If so, their most important purpose will have been served.

XII. CONCLUSION

A key question of this study was, "Does the District Council 37 Education Fund work?" The answer is that, yes, the Education Fund does work, though with certain problems and limitations. The Fund has attracted thousands of workers to its wide variety of educational programs and services. Through the Education Fund, many workers who had been out of school for years have received education and training at little or no cost. This study has attempted to illustrate how a large population of workers with strong training needs have been motivated to meet those needs within an institution they inherently trust and feel is "theirs."

Yet there are limits to the Education Fund's success. Certain groups of workers have been excluded from its coverage. Of those who are eligible for Fund benefits, many have chosen not to utilize it. Though the Fund has reached many workers, there are also many whom it has not served. It is not known whether this is due to the workers' lack of need for education or to something inherent in the Fund itself. This could be a valuable area for further exploration.

Further, has the Fund "succeeded" if it manages to train people for career advancement when opportunities are very limited? While this is only sometimes the case, it often seems hard to reconcile the primary goal of the Fund with the existing realities of New York's economic situation.

The Fund also faces decisions as the new Council benefits plan goes into effect in 1979. What impact will the addition of 20,000 newly eligible Fund members have? How will the new budgetary arrangement work? Will

programs need to be expanded or cut back? Should job-related education receive more or less emphasis? These decisions will probably have to be made in the face of increasing budgetary constraints and outside pressures for accountability.

Throughout its existence, the Education Fund has directed its services to a population of working adults who in many instances have been "turned off" to learning and have many fears associated with returning to school. Built into the structure of the Fund are a number of features and services which do an impressive job of easing the transition of these adults back into the classroom. A number of these features may well have relevance far beyond District Council 37. An examination of how they work may be of value for those interested in expanding the educational opportunities of workers in other settings.

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